THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF PROGRESS IN RELIGION

JANUARY 1917

"Speak unto this people that they go forward"

New York Chicago
San Antonio

THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

GEORGE H. BADGER, Editor

ERNEST C. SMITH, Assistant Editor.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:—John Haynes Holmes, Edgar S. Wiers, George R. Gebauer, Alson H. Robinson, Albert R. Vail, Frederick R. Griffin, J. E. Williams, Charles P. Wellman, R. D. Van Tassel, C. W. Reese.

CONTENTS FOR JANUARY, 1917

PAGE

Editorial 121

Making Our Own Religion ..... *Rev. Charles Graves* 124

A Protest ..... *Rev. Maxwell Savage* 128

Stalled 129

New Books 131

The Quarter-Hour Communion ..... *Dr. Frank Carleton Doan* 132

Contrasts (a Poem) ..... *John D. Gage* 135

Western Conference News 136

New England News Letter 139

Middle States Letter 140

Fellowship Notices 144

Supplication (a Poem) ..... *L. E. Cary* 144

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:—One Dollar. Send remittance by check or money order, made payable to THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE, and addressed to the office of our Treasurer, 105 South Dearborn St., Chicago.

Office of Publication: MOUNT MORRIS, ILL.

NEW YORK, 61 East 34th Street. CHICAGO, 105 S. Dearborn Street.

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

Entered as second class matter at the post office at Mount Morris, Ill.

☞Postmaster—Send all post office notices of change of address to The Unitarian Advance, 105 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

The Unitarian Advance

Formerly The Unitarian—Established 1906

Volume VII JANUARY, 1917 Number 5

WHAT a queer city Boston is, in so many different interesting ways! It is the birthplace of Ralph Waldo Emerson—and John L. Sullivan; it is the mother-home of American Unitarianism—and Christian Science; it possesses the noblest symphony orchestra on the continent—and the world pennant in baseball; it maintains the *Atlantic Monthly*—and the sorriest galaxy of morning newspapers that any city in the land has reason to be ashamed of; it gives America's warmest welcome to Rabindranath Tagore—and Billy Sunday is having his record-breaking series of revival meetings there. Isn't it queer?

* * *

THE queerest thing about Boston that we ever heard of was that gathering of Unitarian ministers in the church which boasts the ancestry of Cotton Mather and Ralph Waldo Emerson, to hear Billy Sunday address—just them! Nobody can accuse THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE of undue narrowness as regards Billy Sunday's mission. Our editorial letter files contain a choice collection of letters—done up in asbestos to afford proper fire insurance for the other contents of those files—expressing lurid opinions of us for speaking so kindly of Sunday's invasion of Philadelphia; and yet we abated not a shred the iniquity of our gentleness. We believe that Billy Sunday has his proper place in the religious work of the twentieth century. But that place is not the vestry of the Second Church in Boston, speaking to an audience made up exclusively of Unitarians. For self-respect means something, even in religious circles; and a certain loyalty to staunch and noble ideals of religious sanity demands something of insistence for the things we stand for, without compromise with things for which we cannot stand, even while we realize the sincerity of those advocating those other things.

* * *

BESIDES, why should Unitarian ministers want to hear Billy Sunday speak to Unitarian ministers? Sunday is a "live wire" factor in contemporary religion; a factor to be taken generously into account; a phenomenon of force which Unitarian ministers will do well to study—and at close quarters, and without the aloofness of isolating contempt. But Billy Sunday addressing Unitarian ministers isn't at all the phenomenon with which they have to deal; that isn't *the* Billy Sunday that counts in the least! As well look for a character-revealing portrait of Grover Cleveland, not when as a statesman he sat amidst his cabinet, but when on vacation he snuggled lumpily in the stern of a dory waiting for the fish to bite; as well study the genius of Sarah Bernhardt, not as she appears in the robes of Cleopatra on the stage, but in her bathing suit on the beach of a French watering place; as well expect to find the real Theodore Roosevelt, not on the stump in Arizona, but patting babies' heads at an East Side baby show—as expect to experience the real thing which Billy Sunday means in religious dynamics, by inviting him to address an audience made up of Unitarian ministers. And Boston Unitarian ministers, at that!

* * *

OUR denomination at large owes great things to the Unitarians of Boston—the glory of a splendid history and tradition; the accumulated achievements of sturdy fidelities of the past decades; and the ever-present providence of lavish generosity and unstinted fellowship in the national work of our cause, which would be meagre enough were it not for this constant tide of liberal support from New England. But there is one thing, we deplore, which the denomination is not receiving from these strong Boston churches in the measure in which it ought to receive—the help of efficient spiritual leadership. The blunder of that Billy Sunday meeting is one of the signs of this failing. For everywhere outside of New England, Billy Sunday stands for that which is most bitterly and aggressively against us—and what we are most bitterly and aggressive-

ly up against! It is because of that which is *wrong* about the Billy Sunday gospel, and the Billy Sunday method, and the Billy Sunday frame of mind, that there seems great need of Unitarian churches in the great non-New England country at all. The measure of Sunday's tremendous successes is the measure of our difficulties and our consecrations. And now to discover that when Billy Sunday invades the one spot on the map where Unitarianism is "at home" and gloriously achieving, our friends there agree that a "concert of amiable silence" and even a meeting of "welcome" represents the attitude of our "leaders near the throne," is woefully to bewilder that spirit which has been most forceful in our frontier motive of self-sacrifice, of loyalty, and stalwart message-bearing.

* * *

WE CANNOT help fearing that the trouble is that with all their noble traditions and splendid generosity of spirit, the Boston Unitarians fail utterly to comprehend what Unitarianism really means in the great wilderness beyond the Hudson River; that still to them Unitarianism means merely a mitigated orthodoxy—the easy end of conventional Christianity; that still to them does the map of America consist of New England and its western frontiers; that still to them does it seem a valid reason why Unitarians need not support foreign missions that they have Indiana and Oklahoma, Texas and the Pacific Slope to care for—which is about the same as foreign missions, after all. It was a genial impulse, for instance, that suggested recently that all life members of the American Unitarian Association be invited to take an afternoon train to Boston and spend a delightful season of close companionship together. The plan was perfectly feasible—but was its feasibility a wise thing to discover? So it was easy for an official of the Association to meet the statement of a certain "minister's wife" that a part of the hardship of the modern minister is the shortness of the modern pastorate, by statistics of New England proving the contrary—as though New England statistics were the end of the whole matter. Somebody wicked recently contributed to a leading magazine a cruel article, entitled, "New England: The Wallflower of America." It wasn't nice or fair. Certainly it would be grotesquely absurd to speak of New England Unitarianism as the "wallflower" of liberal religion in America; for, historically, statistically, financially, and psychologically, it comes near to being the whole thing. And yet—!

* * *

THE tragedy of the "short pastorate" for the poor minister—and his wife—is a matter not to be ignored. Do we realize just where the significance of that tragedy lies? Mr. Nobb's New England statistics in a recent *Register* unconsciously reveal the point. The richer the church, and the abler the minister, the longer is a pastorate likely to continue. It is chiefly poor churches that change ministers frequently, and it is only poor ministers as a rule who—alas—have to make the rapid changes. There is the pinch of the whole matter; for it is the weaker churches and the poorer ministers that can least afford the cruel vicissitudes involved. Unitarian statistics, both in this regard, and that of smallness of salary, are apt to be misleading in the computation of averages. For weak churches are more often in country towns and sparsely settled regions, and, on the other hand, as the cost of living is less in these places, a smaller salary does not mean so much hardship as in a city parish. But most of our Unitarian churches are in cities or large towns, and so salaries *must* be larger, if ministers are to live at all. With this fact must be recognized another, that when a Unitarian church encounters the storm and stress of harsh vicissitudes, where the demands for self-sacrifice and privation are great, it is likelier than a church in most other communions to curl up its toes and frankly die, rather than loiter along in profitless dying. So that the margin of precarious life is smaller with us than with most denominations. Lest we make ourselves a text for one of the genial Mr. Wilson's clever "Burdock" letters, let us hasten to add that this is not a wail of pessimism. Unitarians feel more readily than other people that they can live in spiritual safety without a church, and that no church at all is better than a church without self-respect.

THERE is honestly no reason for pessimism in the Unitarian body today, save at the hands of those who are afraid to have anything said to jar the Unitarian self-complacency. Our tendency to criticize ourselves and to call one another to account, the rigor of our zest to challenge our own shortcomings and cry out aloud against the weaknesses within our body, are a part of the tingling optimism of growing life. Unitarians are discovering themselves in terms of *responsibility,* more than in terms of self-satisfaction; that is all. They are discovering that they owe something to the world, and not simply to themselves. That is why they are becoming impatient to the point of disagreeableness before every voice that seeks to stifle the eagerness of self-searching challenge. We can grow only with the pains of growth. That is why we speak out frankly of the things we do not like. That is why so many of us feel the betrayal at the hands of those, for instance, who would receive a Billy Sunday invasion in Boston with the dull strategy of a conspiracy of "dignified silence." That is why we grow impatient with those who would lull our enthusiasms to tame tranquility by chanting cheerful antiphonies of "What good people are we all!" and "How heaven-like to be few!"

* * *

WE LIVE in an age of great inventiveness and resourcefulness; at the end of an epoch, indeed, which has given more to mankind of miracle-working invention than the world has ever known before. So much of labor-saving, wealth-increasing, power-augmenting achievement! The trouble is, the whole sum of all this labor-saving and wealth-increasing device has not reduced the world's labor after all, nor minimized that aggregated woe of poverty which is of course the world's measure of insufficiency of wealth. There is the strange paradox. And the keen edge of the paradox lies in the fact that because of the shrewdness and wonder-working of men's inventive faculties for a past century, a great war fought in this twentieth century is the most cruel and hideous calamity that has fallen on humanity in all the centuries of civilization. Why cannot the inventive genius of man that attains to so many other marvels, discover a method of peace? Why cannot the creative passion of modern investigators, and scientists, and experimenters discover a way of abolishing poverty? What is the matter with us, that every good thing that we invent or discover, turns out to be not good for much, after all, in the great issues of life? Does the world really want peace and the abolishment of poverty, in honest fact—that the genius who might come pointing out the way would have any welcome amongst us?

* * *

THE one great end above all others which ought to be sought for as the consummation of the war is that all possibility of another such war be absolutely removed from future destiny. Will that end be secured simply by the "crushing" of Germany—if England, and France, and Russia keep on being the same sort of nations they always have been? We cannot see how. Will that end be secured if Germany succeed in "conquering" the allies—whatever that may mean? We cannot imagine it. The only "end" that can mean anything of real progress or prosperity to any nations in the future must lie in the failure of everybody to "crush" or "humiliate" anybody; must lie in a peace that is won not by conquest, but by joint discovery of civilization's better way; that triumph of twentieth century inventive genius, better than flying machine, or wireless telegraphy, or spineless cactus—the discovery of a way for nations to live in neighborship without stupid distrusts or ambitions; the discovery of a civilization without need of a war machine! Has not the time come when that part of the world that is sane has tremendous right—accumulated indeed to terrific *duty*—to demand of that part of the world that is insane, that it give heed to sanity—and give to the genius of civilization the right to adventure its utmost test?

* * *

WE REGRET that through a printer's mistake we failed to credit an important article to its proper author. "The Reality of Error and Evil" was written by the Rev. Henry Gow, pastor of one of the leading Unitarian churches in London, and published in *The Inquirer* of London, from which we reprinted it.

Making Our Own Religion

By Rev. Charles Graves,
Albany, N. Y.

I AM going to take for a text a few words from a recent novel. It is an unusual novel. A very interesting novel you will find it, if you care for a story that is more than a story, a story that sets you quarreling with it, and may even go so far as to lead you to take issue with your own thoughts. There is probably no better condition for a person to get into than to take issue with his own thoughts, his own creeds, his own sure conclusions, be they religious, political, social. The tremendous progress that has characterized the scientific world has come about just by this process of taking issue with ideas, doctrines, certainties, our own final conclusions.

"Religion," says the author of this book,[1] "might be a good thing if folks would make it up as they go along. The fellows that invented it had a use for it."

I might repeat that: "Religion might be a good thing if folks would make it up as they go along. The fellows that invented it had a use for it." I want you to look at it, and look at your religious ideas through it. There is no excuse for anyone ever to be touchy about his religious ideas. If I have any religious opinions, religious convictions, that amount to anything, that have any life, any force in them, then I ought to expect that the world will challenge my religious opinions and beliefs. A person who is afraid to have his religion called into question, criticized, isn't worthy of any religion.

"Religion is good if we make it up as we go along." Has the author expressed a truth that is radically contrary to the accepted idea of religion? The idea that religion can be something that people make up as they go along through life seems to strike a fatal blow at the very heart of the religious life. According to the prevailing idea, religion is a divine affair; its institutions, its rites and sacraments, baptism, and the holy communion or mass come from the Deity. All the doctrines of the church have been fashioned by divine inspiration. They are truer than anything human could be, being made up of truths which man could never have devised, and are so much bigger than human knowledge and so far beyond the power of human comprehension that we must perforce accept them in the spirit of unquestioning faith; is not that the usual conception of religion? And yet Mr. Edwin Herbert Lewis, from whose book I take my text, intimates that every good and useful religion has been made up by man as he goes along.

Now, I submit that it is of considerable importance to us whether this writer has touched a truth or blatantly expressed a superficial and cynical estimate of religion. So I am going to try to discuss the matter with you briefly.

Is religion—let me make it as pointed and personal as possible—is the Christian religion something that has been made up by man as he has gone along through the world? Is it something which he has pieced together out of his own experiences, his knowledge, his prejudices, his imaginings, his hopes, his fears? Or is the older and popular conception true?

In Bible story we read that Moses went up to the top of Mount Sinai and while there the Deity handed him two stone tablets on which the divine hand had carved the ten commandments. That is the ancient Hebrew priestly conception of how the Hebrew religion came to the people of that time. Early Christian writers, and many modern ones, assure us that the whole and only body of true Christian doctrine was given to the saints, a small group of devout believers, by the Christ, just as a treasure is given to a person. And it is freely asserted—indeed this is one of the absolutely necessary features distinguishing the divine from the human—that this faith once given to the saints is complete in all its parts, and no man may add anything to it without being guilty of works of supererogation, and no man may take anything from it without being guilty of attempting to destroy God and his truth. It is for this reason that the Roman church, when it makes a change in doctrine or

[1] *Those about Trench,* by Edwin Herbert Lewis.

ceremony, takes such great pains to show that no change or addition has been made to the faith originally given. It was all there, though perhaps only by implication, so that all the church has done has been to make a little clearer to the people what, however, was already clear enough to the church or priest.

I want to pause a moment here to examine that. The principle which is involved here appears in more fashions than one. When the Roman church explains or defends the adoption of a new doctrine on the ground that the new doctrine was already in the old, it is doing only what the liberal orthodox Protestant does who tries to save his orthodoxy by saying that he can repeat the expression, "I believe in the resurrection of the body," because he spiritually interprets it to himself to mean the resurrection of the spiritual body. Bodily resurrection *implies* spiritual resurrection. Liberal orthodoxy is based on the idea that the ancient dogmas are all fundamentally and essentially true if only we can develop the truth that is in them. Thus the dogma that the Bible is the word of God is altogether true, because somewhere within its pages it "contains the word of God." The argument is plausible enough, and if it is really true, then perhaps we should have to admit that the Christian religion was given to the world, complete in all its details, back there when the faith was given to the saints, once and for all—that religion is God-given, not man-made.

Now, if that principle is true in religion, it ought to be and would be true in other things. If this resort to spiritual interpretation of old things and the setting up of new doctrines is but a clarifying of old religious obscurities, then we ought, I think, to go so far as to say that modern scientific conclusions are simply clearer elucidations of old scientific conclusions. It would be perfectly legitimate to intimate, as Dr. Lyman Abbot once did—when he seemed to think a sound reputation for orthodoxy was more to be desired than accuracy of statement—that the old doctrine that disease is the result of demoniacal possession is quite true, because microbes which are now known to be the cause of disease are simply demons of a very much smaller and more devilish variety. It would also be perfectly proper to say that there is virtually no difference between a bird and an aviator, because they both have wings and they both fly.

Soon as you begin to press this idea, that anything connected with this life was complete to begin with, you discover the absurdity of it.

Just look at this idea as applied to religion from another angle. Suppose the Deity were to give to me the doctrines and ceremonies of the one and only true religion. I at once pass it on to you —tell you of these divine doctrines and ceremonies. But you can see them only as they come to you distorted by my imperfections of language and of understanding. Soon as ever these divine doctrines and ceremonies pass from man to man, they cease to be in any proper sense divine and infallible. In a word, a divine religion is no better than a human one unless the Deity gives that divine revelation to every person. One must have a very poor opinion of the sagacity of the Almighty when he assumes that, in order to give the true Christian religion to the world, all that was necessary was to give the whole body of Christian doctrine to a group of saints, more famed for their obscurity, and ignorance, and superstition, than for anything else. The very fact that there is and always has been such an endless variety of opinion as to just what the religion is, is evidence enough that the Christian religion transmitted through the generations is not God-given.

Note the situation today. There are several hundred different sects, each claiming to be the true teacher of the true religion. The members of one church are by no means agreed as to what religion really is. There never has been a time when it was not thus. Before Christianity, there was the same divergence of opinion. When Paul visited Athens, he was surprised to find the people there so cosmopolitan in religion that they had erected altars, not only to all the gods they had ever heard of and that anyone had ever worshiped, but they had gone so far as to erect an altar to the unknown God. They were ready for the next religious stranger that came along. Such a state of affairs as this could not have originated, could not exist today, if religion were a set of doctrines and cere-

monies instituted by the Deity. So it would seem that religion cannot possibly be other than the work of man.

Mr. Lewis intimates that religion is effective, is a living power, is a good thing, only when we make it up as we go along. There is a phase to this I want to consider first.

Religion is a menace to human welfare soon as ever we try to make some other person's religion, our rule of action, or the religion of an earlier generation the guide and goal of a later generation. For example: the church stained itself with the blood of thousands of heretics because it had taken the doctrines of earlier generations as the fullness of religious truth. Men have been driven from their pulpits and from their professorial chairs in the colleges in this country, and within our own recollection, because the churches, the religious leaders, had committed themselves to the doctrines of an earlier time as the only religious truth. The church put out the eyes of Galileo; it did away with the pioneer surgeon Vesalius; it opposed and discredited Columbus; and all because it had taken as its religion the ideas and teachings of an earlier time. The great churchmen became cruel persecutors because the religion they were defending was not made up by them, but was made up by others, years and even generations earlier.

The difference between the effect and the value of religion when you make it up as you go along, and when you take the religion of some other person or age, is suggested by the early history of New England. The Puritans persecuted and executed the witches because they had accepted as religious truth the old Bible declaration, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Now, these same people had another religious idea which they had made their own, and it was an idea which, in its most important features they had made up for themselves, out of their experience. The idea which had prevailed for generations, and which was the prevailing belief then, was that the monarchy, rule by king, was the divinely ordained form of government. There was no difference between religion and politics in those days. To disobey the king was to disobey God. To rise up in rebellion against the king was equivalent to putting one's self outside of religion. To speak against the king was to speak against God. That would have remained the political, the religious belief of the early New Englanders if they, in this matter, had accepted the religion already made. But instead of this they made up quite a different doctrine. They would recognize no king except God as having a right to rule over them. That this doctrine led eventually to unfortunate results, that, at the time, it was not free from serious defects, is not to the point. Nothing is wholly good. Its great worth was in the fact that it laid the foundations of democracy, it lined up religion with democracy, or rule by the people, just as in older times religion had been lined up with rule by the king and against government by the people.

There we have a hint, too, of what the author of my text means when he says, "The fellows that invented religion had a use for it." Now, the author, I am sure, does not mean to convey the idea, advanced by some, that the makers of the religious systems were actuated by only an evil purpose. For example: when the church fathers got together and decided that, if a person didn't believe in the Trinity, and believe in it in a certain way, he would go to hell, when they made the people believe that to neglect the services of the church would be to incur the eternal anger of the Deity and suffer everlasting punishment, there was no thought of trying, by this device, to enslave the people for ulterior and altogether unworthy purposes. On the other hand, they were so determined that people should believe in the Trinity, should regularly attend the church's services, because they themselves were firmly convinced that only in that way could the people make sure of that salvation that would save them from the eternal hell. Whenever men have invented a religion or a religious idea or doctrine, they have invented the thing they believed would be of the greatest good.

A business woman remarked to me one day, "I wish I could invent something every woman wants to use." I believe it is substantially that spirit which has actuated the inventors or makers of religion. Their hearts have been set on discovering the truth that would eternally benefit everybody, that everybody would

want to use. And so, when men invented the idea, the religious doctrine, that the king ruled on earth in God's stead, and that the people should be loyally and gratefully subject to him, they were not lining up religion for the interest of the king and against the interests of the people. They saw that as God's way, and what was God's way must be for the good of all. And so, when later the men of New England reversed this, and invented the doctrine of God as king and men and women directly subject to him, and to no less a one, they were designing a religion which to them seemed to be of the highest possible service to the people.

Take what will perhaps appeal to you as being a more distinctively religious example, the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ. The doctrine was invented at a time when people couldn't see how it was possible for man to get into heaven by any endeavors of his own. That doctrine brought comfort, and hope, and courage into the lives of thousands upon thousands of people. I think many were inspired to some sort of nobler living by it. Here was a doctrine, a religion if you please, which made life at least endurable. And I am thinking that this religious doctrine was fashioned out of the needs, out of the experience and understanding, of the people. It was not merely a borrowing of something from what had gone before. Men fashioned it there and then, because they had use for it, because it was the most useful thing they could devise. But that doctrine is no longer useful, and so we find that of late years the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ has tended to lower the moral tone, the character of values, of Christian church-membership. That religious doctrine is rapidly becoming a positive damage, and the explanation is that we have gone beyond it. The religious doctrine that was fashioned yesterday was good for yesterday. To be of value today, religion must be made out of the experience of today.

This fact is forcing its way into the consciousness of many people. An evangelist in a neighboring city says, "We need a new religion." He is preaching an old doctrine, and because you and I do not believe in his doctrines he condemns us as unchristian. Still, he is so alive to the fact that religion has been falling down all along the line, that he says we must have a new religion. Then I hear men, standing in the old pulpits, where the doctrines of former generations are vigorously preached, suddenly declare with eloquence that burns with earnestness that we have not yet had Christianity, that we have been hardly dabbling with it, and you know and I know that what they mean is that the old-time religion is not in living touch with today. The religion father makes will not meet the son's needs and aspirations. When I read in a book just published, written by a man who is going through the horrors of trench warfare, that we have come to the closing chapter of the Christian religion, I know and you know that he isn't thinking of the spirit of religion, but of the end of a religion—a religious system —which has been outgrown, and that we must shape a religion that shall be of use to us with our newer and different demands and conceptions of life. The religion that centers in the worship of God as a war-God, that worships him with the hymn, "The Son of God Goes Forth to War," is not a religion which can possibly be of use to the men who believe that war is the negation of good and the destruction of the best in life. The man who believes democracy is the hope of the race can find little help in singing, "O Worship the King."

You recall, I am sure, the struggle which went on in the Presbyterian church to get rid of that part in its confession which consigned all non-elect infants to hell. The men who championed the change admitted that there was a time when good religious men found comfort and satisfaction in the idea that God could do such a horrible thing as to cast helpless infant souls into endless torment, but they said men had grown more humane and could not any more worship a God less humane than they.

You see, do you not, what I mean by saying that religion, to be of any possible use to man, must really be made up as we go along? I have heard men say that they didn't go to church because there was nothing there for them. There are thousands in the churches who are suffering spiritual and, if you please, religious starvation the while they recite the creeds and go through the ceremonies. There is nothing there for them.

It is all a meaningless show, just because these persons do not seem to know that these creeds and ceremonies are not their religion, and that the only religion a man ever had that was of any good to him was framed up by him out of his own experiences.

I often wonder why it is we miss the significance of the creed-making activities of the early churchmen. They battled with one another in the fashioning of creeds and sacraments, and we have a notion that they were guided by a divine spirit to do that business for all time. Nothing of the sort. They were fashioning out of their experiences, out of their understanding, a religion which they believed would meet the needs they felt. The religion of other generations didn't satisfy them, and so they made their own. Why aren't we men and women enough to do what they did? Finding ourselves out of touch with the old religion, why do not we fashion out of our own experience and understanding a religion that shall meet our needs? I insist we shall virtually be without a religion unless we do this.

What a different thing religion would be if every man who has gone to church today, and everybody who hasn't gone to church, would make up his or her own religion in such fashion that it would be satisfying and inspiring.

Without bothering about a proper scientific definition of religion, we may put this down as generally, I think fundamentally, true—that religion is associated with our highest welfare, the welfare of others as well as ourselves. Just think what a power, what a forward and upward moving power, religion would be if it embodied our highest aspirations, our clearest understanding of the world's moral and spiritual need! You often hear people remark on the wonderful power which the church exercised on the lives of the people a few generations ago. The church was the big thing. What it said went. That was because religion did then represent the things, the ideas, the ideals, the truths which man believed to be above all ideas, and ideals, and truths, the highest. Religion as embodied in the churches today has lost that power because its creeds and ceremonies, its ideas and purposes, do not represent the ideas and purposes which men believe to be highest and best.

Now, suppose you took the big things of life and made them your religion. Here is justice. You know the world needs it. You know, if men were but just to one another, a thousand economic, and social, and political snarls would be straightened out. Suppose you made justice to your fellow man one of your religious doctrines. Honesty—you know how dishonesty increases the expense of living. You know how dishonesty poisons our business life. Suppose, seeing how important honesty is in our daily life, you made it one of the doctrines of your religion, as in old time the men made the Trinity a religious doctrine. Righteousness—the world's need of it—is painfully well known to you. The righteousness of God, the righteousness of Christ, these are good, but that is not what is needed. Righteousness of men and women is the world's salvation. Now, suppose you made personal righteousness as deep a part of your religion as the old doctrine of vicarious atonement was to men of old. Heaven—that has been the goal of all religions. To get to heaven has been the reason for the existence of religion, but generally heaven has been beyond the tomb. Now, we see that it is heaven on earth that is the most desirable. So, suppose you and I made the setting up of the kingdom of heaven here and now a vital part of our religion, the goal of our religion, as in the old day was the heaven of golden streets. Don't you see what a wonderfully helping power religion would become? In a word, if our religion all the time embodied our highest and holiest aspirations, what a force for good religion would become.

A PROTEST.

By Rev. Maxwell Savage.

Have I lost my sense of humor, or did I have a right to feel sad, as I stood in the Mather Room of the Second Church on Monday afternoon, while one or two hundred Unitarian ministers listened to Rev. William Sunday? Have I lost my sense of humor, or was I right in being conscious of a sense of tragedy, when many of the ministers applauded or laughed at his words?

As I stood there, I saw two pictures:

First, that of this same evangelist in some Western or Southern city where there is only one Unitarian church, if any, and comparatively few Unitarians, vilifying and cursing our Unitarianism, stirring up the mob to loathe this faith of ours, and thereby blocking Unitarianism and making it infinitely hard for the isolated Unitarian minister, doing all he could in his vulgar and hate-creating fashion to cast stumblingblocks in the path of our liberal faith. He, with the crowd with him!

Second, I saw him before me in Boston, applauded by ministers who are supposed to be brothers in the faith to that isolated minister. Of course he was their guest, and should therefore have received the courtesy shown him. But why, in the first place, should he be the guest of Unitarian ministers? The tragedy of it for me (a big word, but I use it advisedly) lay in inviting him, in applauding and laughing with him, and in the fact that the evangelist when in the midst of Unitarianism has failed to show the moral courage I had thought was his.

Take those three points! First. Why should Unitarian ministers here, because they are many, be cordial to him who is viciously inimical to Unitarians when and where they are few? Am I illiberal? At least I hope I am not "loose" in my liberalism.

Second. The laughter and applause showed, I feel, that many of our ministers hereabout fail to take seriously the fact that the childish, puerile gospel, blasphemous toward God and depraving to man, is listened to by 50,000 or so a day and has its effect. Many of our people, because they are and have been liberal many years, delude themselves into thinking that the majority of other people are therefore liberal. If more of those present had known what it is to stand up against a Billy Sunday campaign in some Western city, I think there would have been less applause.

Third. Until today I had willingly given Mr. Sunday credit for moral courage. He did give us a sermon which backed up my contention that he is the most consistent orthodox minister in the United States today. Still, numbers, mere numbers, made him change his tune in so far as his attitude is concerned. In the West, with the crowd with him, against one Unitarian minister, so brave, so uncompromising in his war on "the rotten mass of Unitarianism," and by his attitude inspiring lesser evangelists and unnumbered people to block our growth; in Boston, still with the crowd with him, but before many Unitarians and in the midst of a community enriched by the memory of great Unitarians, he compromises, is not so brave as I had thought him!

Could anything be a more obvious, sentimental play to the crowd than his Sunday night maundering about his lifelong reverence for Boston and Bostonians, his visit in the spirit to the grave of Channing, his paying him the "tribute," "We may differ about the Deity of Jesus, but we shall not quarrel"?

He has visited in the flesh the home town of Unitarian ministers in the West who are trying to help people to the beliefs of Channing, and has done all he could to destroy them. Why this difference of tune? Does geography change a gospel? To me it is tragedy to find a man whom I thought sincere, a politician hearkening to the voice of the people.

Luther did not change when he went to Worms, but in the midst of those differing from him, he said and *lived*, "Here I stand; I can do no otherwise. God help me. Amen."

No, I have not lost my sense of humor, but it becomes rather grim when I find Unitarians so "liberal" that they lean over backward in their effort to be Christian in spirit, and forget, because they are many, their fellows where they are few; when I find Boston on its knees to Billy Sunday, whom Cleveland has refused for years to let in; when I learn that Mr. Sunday tempers the wind of his sincerity to the sheep which to him are black apparently only when they are few.—[*The Christian Register*, November 16, 1916.

STALLED.

I am a minister of an orthodox church. My age is thirty. My church is an average suburban church, paying an average salary. I like my work and my people. The church has made more than the average progress under my ministry. But I am not satisfied. I feel that I am

not using my ability to the best advantage. From the time I was ordained, I have been awakening from a dream that the orthodox church of the present day was really a liberal church. I know now that it will be a good many generations before the orthodox churches become really liberal in teachings or practice. Several years ago, I voiced my fears to some of my ministerial friends. They told me that they had felt that way at one time, but that they had adjusted themselves to their mother church. But my development was the other way. I find at ministerial meetings that I am growing away from the men who were formerly my advisers.

My position in my church is solid. I have been here long enough so that the people know that I am a sincere hard worker, and even though disagreeing with my mental attitude they stand by me. I have succeeded in reaching a number of men who have thought themselves out of touch with religion, because of the orthodoxy of other churches in our little city. I have lost a very small percentage from our communion because of my liberal attitude.

Personally, I came to the conclusion that to be morally fair and intellectually free, I should ally myself with a church that is openly liberal. I found that people of liberal tendencies thought it a little unjust to keep my relation to an orthodox church. The one church that appealed was the Unitarian church. It is a momentous decision that a man makes when he throws over the heritage of the past to ally himself with a new church for the sake of intellectual and moral freedom. I made the choice. I made my application for fellowship, and sent my credentials to the committee. They were found in good order and fellowship was granted.

I can't imagine any more pleasant or invigorating task that sponsoring the cause of liberalism. The world seems to be so full of people who can't harmonize human experience with orthodoxy. I know from the little success I have had in my compromise position, that the fields are white for the harvest. World conditions today call as never before, for liberalism tempered with divine sympathy. From the outside I can see it.

This all happened some time ago. At the time I received my certificate of fellowship, I was informed that as Unitarian churches closed during July and August it would be a number of months before I should have an opportunity of appearing in any of them. The months have grown into years. An occasional letter from the Field Secretary brings me the information that there are more ministers than there are churches. I know that the Unitarian churches owe me nothing. I have no complaint, but bide my time.

In the meanwhile, I am in my old field. I am preaching a gospel that I believe in. I am not compromising myself intellectually, but I can't feel morally honest. I would go into a Unitarian field at a sacrifice if it offered opportunities for development. The Secretaries know nothing of such a field. Some of my friends who know my attitude have offered me business opportunities. I hesitate. I feel that I have a message, and that before everything else I am a preacher. What shall I look forward to in the future?

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH, SALT LAKE CITY.

By JOHN MALICK, *Minister.*

Services were resumed in the fall in Unity Hall, which has been much improved. Through the generosity of parishioners, the interior was redecorated and new strips provided for the aisles. A suit against adjoining property owners came to a friendly settlement. The amount received, $265, was spent for a cement roadway, which protects our property and disposes of a vexing matter of long standing. In necessary repairs and improvements the church has spent $600 during the year.

The Lloyd Alliance carries the paving tax, a part of the choir expense, contributes to the minister's salary, and meets numerous current demands. A dinner or luncheon is given each month. A course of work is being carried out this year, led by members and speakers from the outside, which is planned to cover the most important activities of the church.

Through the work of the Finance Committee, appointed at the last annual meeting, eight subscriptions were increased and fourteen new names added. Rev. William Channing Brown spent three days with us in November, working with the Finance Committee. This effort resulted in sixteen new subscriptions, four increased and eight renewed. Not the least of Mr. Brown's visit was the contagion of his confidence in our cause and

enthusiasm for it. About eighty came to the monthly dinner, at the close of which he told us of the larger work to hearten us in our own.

The city has had a revival effort of six weeks in the Biederwolf Tabernacle, built for the occasion. Those counted absent, or worse, were Catholic, Mormon, Jewish, Episcopalian, Christian Science, and Unitarian churches. The last two came in for special attention.

The sermons for November and December dealt with the following subjects: "The Religious Experience;" "The Evolution of Hell;" "Saved *From* and Saved *To*—Escape and Opportunity;" "The Conquering God and the Way of Salvation;" "Opiate or Dynamic—The Church of the Heavenly Rest vs. the Church of the Advancing Kingdom;" "The Truce of God;" and "Lights and Shadows of the Year."

On December 3rd, the minister spoke on "Poland, Her Service and Need." The collection, $18.75, was sent to the Polish Relief Committee. On November 26, Mr. Charles Mason Remey of Washington, D. C., took the morning sermon and told us of the Bahai faith.

NEW BOOKS.

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE JEWISH PROPHETS: A STUDY IN BIBLICAL SOCIOLOGY, *by William Bennett Bizzell, President of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas.* Sherman. French and Company. $1.25.

This is a wholesome book, full of interesting suggestion. Dr. Bizell is not indeed committed to the full zest of the higher criticism, and his book is avowedly not for scholars preeminently. But it is scholarly in a good sense of the word, and vitally concerned with one of the most vital interests of today. It helps to the realization of how fundamentally modern the best part of the Bible writing is. It is a real good fortune to a multitude of Bible students in college classes and more modest Sunday schools and Bible institutes, to have such a book within reach. For while interesting to the casual reader, a well-devised scheme of "Topics for Reports and Investigations," and suggestions for "Further Reading" at the end of each chapter, add materially to its usefulness as a textbook.

THE RELIGION OF EXPERIENCE: A BOOK FOR LAYMEN AND THE UNCHURCHED, *by Horace J. Bridges.* The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

This is good writing, and peculiarly significant as coming from the President of the Chicago Ethical Society. For its spirit is genially sympathetic and appreciative, not only of all that vitally pertains to real religion, which was of course to be expected, but of the actual story of conventional and historical religion as now dominant among men. Mr. Bridges is sanely and intelligently critical in the right sense of that word; he blurs his appreciations with no false concessions or shifty vagueness. He honestly faces facts, and frankly discusses issues; but the total value of his work is constructive and inspiring. His table of contents is indicative of the scope of the book: "I. The Position and Outlook of the Churches;" "II. The Causes of the Relative Inefficiency of the Churches;" "III. The Reinterpretation of God;" "IV. The Rediscovery of Christ;" "V. The Resurrection of Socrates;" "VI. Inspiration: Its Nature and Conditions;" "VII. Immortality: A Study On Plato;" "VIII. Religion and Nationality;" "Conclusion: The Hope of Spiritual Unification."

SLAVERY OF PROSTITUTION: A PLEA FOR EMANCIPATION, *by Maud E. Miner, Secretary of the New York Probation and Protective Association.* The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

These books have to be written, and it is well to have them written with the dignified frankness and unshrinking directness with which Miss Miner has done this writing—albeit, kept wholesome and sweet by a rational temper of reserve. This is certainly a thoroughgoing research, and must prove invaluable to those whose part in the enterprise of social regeneration demands the mastering of the facts in this sordidly disagreeable range of human experience. Miss Miner has a keen sense of dramatic values; her writing is not dull or wearying, ever. Vivid and eager, it is yet sane and sympathetic, and it is honest in its painstaking fairness of analysis and interpretation.

VISITORS FROM THE EAST.

Rev. Fred M. Eliot, associate pastor of the First Church at Cambridge, Mass., is to spend the greater part of January in this district as a Billings Lecturer, his mission being primarily to our college town churches. His appointments are as follows: January 2nd and 3rd, Detroit; 4th and 5th, Ann Arbor; 7th and 9th, Evanston; 10th and 11th, Madison; 12th, Menomonie; 14th, St. Paul; 17th and 18th, Iowa City; 19th, Davenport; 20th, Bloomington; 21st, Urbana; 23rd, Indianapolis; 24th Cincinnati.

In February Rev. John Haynes Holmes of the Church of the Messiah, New York, is to speak in Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Madison, Iowa City, and Lincoln, Neb.

During the same month, Dr. Crothers, who comes as Billings Lecturer, will be heard at Cincinnati, St. Louis, Des Moines, St. Paul, Menomonie, Chicago, Indianapolis, Dayton, and Canton, as well as at certain points in the Southern Conference.

The Quarter-Hour Communion

(Un quart d'heure pour Dieu)

Conducted by DR. FRANK CARLETON DOAN

THE ONLY WAY.

I.

As I was saying last month, many thoughtful men have left off praying because they can't see any sense in it. They are willing enough to take time (say, a quarter-hour each day) for prayer. It isn't that. It is that they don't believe praying is going to do any good, or make any difference in our human lives. Prayer, they think, belongs to the childhood of the race and is not for grown-up men in this twentieth century.

It has been my privilege to know a good many of these prayerless men, and to talk with them in the long hours of the night when friends open their hearts to each other and talk of unseen things. And, as often as not, we have discussed this very matter of prayer, and have gone over our difficulties together, as I now go over them with you, my readers —and friends.

II.

The first difficulty concerns the kind of things men are apt to pray for. Most of the things human beings ask for when they pray are so trivial that they don't deserve to be answered. Some good people, if we are to judge them by their prayers, think of God as a sort of glorified Santa Claus—a good-natured spirit who lives away off somewhere, just where nobody knows, who loves us, his children, dearly, visits us on great occasions, and gives to us lavishly out of his inexhaustible goods; and all that. But who is rather absent-minded about it all and needs to be reminded once in a while that we are still down here, anxiously awaiting his next visitation; and who needs to be prompted lest he overlook our particular and very personal needs and bestow all his goods upon our less needy and less deserving neighbors.

This way of taking prayer is not only trivial; it is a bit pharisaical, if the truth must be told. One needs to pause once in a while and ask oneself: "Who am I that God should be mindful of me, or care whether I am snug and comfortable in my little, private, domesticated life? Instead of asking God to look after and preserve me, perhaps I had better ask myself whether it makes any difference to any living human soul whether I am preserved alive or not?"

All this, of course, is a perfectly valid complaint against the self-seeking spirit of too much of our human praying. But it is no valid objection to what I mean by praying. The "first principle" of true prayer is this: to seek in God the things which you may receive in infinite measure, yet without shutting off any other living human soul from the same exhaustless source of supply—such things as joy, courage, loyalty, strength, love, peace.

The clouds can hold only so much. You pray for rain to descend upon your fields. You pray long and hard. And, to suppose a miracle for the sake of our point, your prayer is answered —answered abundantly. God drains the clouds for you and leaves your neighbor and his fields to drought and disaster. Not so with true prayer, the prayer that works miracles within the human soul. The eternal heart is filled with exhaustless stores of joy, and strength, and courage, and peace, and love, and such things. You need not cry out hard and long for them. They are there, to be had for the asking. Ask, and these things of the spirit will pour into your soul, and fill it, and overflow it, and inundate your neighbor's soul. And still the spirit will keep on welling up within you, this spring from the eternal water brooks, and keep on and on, until joy, and strength, and peace, and love, and all such life-preserving energies will cover the human race as the waters cover the sea.

III.

Then there are others who object that prayer is unlawful. This world, they say, is an orderly place, a place of fixed laws—laws which no human desire can alter. Two plus two equal four. What goes up must come down. God has no reverse speed to his eternal motor, and

no brakes. It drives straight ahead all the time without variableness or shadow of turning. Get in the way, and you have to go down before it. That's all. God couldn't, if he would, alter his course just to suit our convenience or to get us out of some scrape. Joshua (or whoever it was) halting the sun in its course till they had made an end of the Amorites; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego passing unscorched through the fiery furnace; the children of Israel passing dry-shod across the bed of the Red Sea—all these performances your modern man dismisses as idle folk-tales or explains in some natural way.

Of course. There is something wholesome in this hard-headed way of the modern man in dealing with the frantic prayers of the ancient children of men. If we play with fire we are going to get burned sooner or later. If we rebuild a city (as they have done out there in San Francisco) on ground that is known to be seismic, some day that city will again be shaken from its insecure foundation; and they needn't blame God in that day, nor call upon him to save them. If we put out onto a sea infested with submarines and floating mines, it is at our own risk; God's hand will not reach down to guide us nor will he change the laws of explosive compounds to save us.

Of course, I say. All that is a commonplace of modern science. Only—having freely granted and frankly faced all this, we need to be told that the domain of laws is by no means so all-inclusive as our middle nineteenth century scientists held it to be. Discoveries are being made these days, mainly in the field of psychophysics, which are extending the power of the human spirit over what we in our ignorance call "Matter." The world, it seems, is to an extraordinary degree plastic under our human hands and yielding to our human wills. We won't stop for instances just now. You can all look up the cases for yourselves in any late text-book of psychophysics. Or you can read *Bergson* for the philosophy of it. All I need to say is that the age of cocksure materialism is up.

In any case there certainly are some things that are not fixed by any known natural laws. And these undecided things, as it turns out, are just the things which concern human life the most. It isn't yet decided in what spirit you and I are going to live out our lives—whether in bitterness or joy, whether with a chant of hate or a song of love in our hearts. It isn't yet decided whether we are going to face the years ahead (years stretching out into eternity) in a weak and halting spirit, or with a brave heart and unfaltering step. It isn't yet decided whether the human race (which is to say you, and I, and men like us) is going to go down in this present world darkness of malignity and strife, or is going to arise once more, beaten and chastened, and go on more steadfastly forward toward the invisible ends of justice, and love, and peace which is its true destination.

And to pray that God may renew a right spirit within us, put strength into our faltering souls and love into our broken hearts—this contradicts no known or fixed law of nature. Nor is there any known law of nature (it ought to be added) that is going to hold us (like some fixed planet) in the path of justice, and righteousness and love. We must make the first move. We must head that way. And then we shall find ourselves caught up and carried along by the irresistible forces of the eternal spirit.

Gravitation can and will fracture and mutilate your body if you fall from a high place and land among the sharp rocks; to pray to God to break your fall would be absurd. But to pray for a renewal of strength from the eternal sources, that your soul may not through any weakness or folly fall from the high place you have already reached in your long, hard climb over the rocks toward God—why, such praying, day in and day out, is the very breath of the soul's life. It is just such spiritual downfalls and spiritual uplifts that go to make up the life history of a soul.

IV.

But then this doesn't seem like real prayer to some of my friends. It is too much like talking to yourself, they say. A very foolish habit indeed. If all these things—joy, strength, love, and all the rest, are, as I hold they are, already in

us, away down deep in our souls; if God, as he seems to me, is just the spirit of justice and love in every human soul; if the answer to prayer is to come not from some "on High" but is to well up from the depths of our own souls—then where's the sense in praying? asking ourselves to strengthen ourselves? asking ourselves to cheer ourselves up? And so on. ?

Well, from my point of view, this last objection to prayer is like saying: "There isn't any point in asking a man to exercise since his muscles are already there."

Praying, as I see it, is exercising the soul, and keeping it exercised against all the weakening, devitalizing forces that are also "already there" in the spiritual make-up of every man. Praying is keeping your soul fit. Every well-regulated man spends at least a quarter-hour the first thing every morning going through his exercises. He has his wall-machine and works at that. Or maybe he prefers the Swedish system without apparatus. But somehow, one way or another, he does exercise. And he knows that physical strength and vigor do come to suffice for the day's sedentary cares and anxieties. A great vital Energy is there, waiting to flow into his muscle cells and vitalize them. But he must make the first move. A muscle, though surrounded all the time by an exhaustless energy, will, if unused, slowly atrophy and wither beyond recovery.

So with praying. A great spiritual Energy pervades all things; is ready to well up within your soul, and revive it, and keep it fit for human service. But you've got to make the first move. You've got to exercise your soul. And it is for this daily quarter-hour spiritual exercise I am pleading. You can take it wherever you are and whenever you will, without any of the costly apparatus or appointments, and without any of the mummeries and mysterious passes of a church. The eternal source is always open for every living creature to draw from. Strength is there, waiting to enter into us. And joy, and wisdom and peace of mind, and love.

V.

But we have to *draw* upon it. This spiritual law, it would seem, is an exact counterpart of the natural law. You can't get coal out of the everlasting hills without mining it. You can't get oil out of the heart of mother earth without drilling for it. When spring is here and the earth is prepared to burst forth into exultant life, the grass, and the bushes, and the trees must draw up the sap. And so on. Nature can't do her part

JOIN NOW---MEMBERSHIP BLANK

The Quarter-Hour Communion

Un quart d'heure pour Dieu

I pledge myself to spend a quarter-hour each day in communion with God, or the Highest I can find.

Name .....

Address .....

No Constitution. No Fees. No Officers. No Meetings.

Cut out, sign and return to Dr. Frank Carleton Doan,

All Souls' Church,

Summit, N. J.

without the active cooperation of her children.

So it is with us in our relation to the eternal source of our souls. We can't get strength, or joy, or wisdom, or any of the things we everlastingly need without consciously drawing upon that source. The coal baron might say, "I think there is coal in yonder hill of mine," or the real estate speculator might say, "I think there is oil on that rocky farm over there." But they would never know for sure until they had dug a drift mine into the hill or shot the first well. So again it is with us. We may say, "I think there is a God; I think there is an exhaustless source of strength, and peace, and joy for our human souls." But we can never know for sure until we have entered into that source and found the abundant life really there.

It's nothing to me that there is coal in the hills unless it can be mined and used to bring warmth to shivering humanity; nothing to me that there is oil in the secret places of the earth unless it can be used to quiet the troubled waters of human life. It's nothing to me that there is a God unless we can reach him, a great Human Energy and put his spirit of eternal strength, and justice, and peace, and love into our human lives and into our human institutions. And the only way to reach God is the way of prayer.

WANTED—QUESTIONS, ETC.

The Editor of this department will be glad to receive questions concerning prayer or any other soul matter; or to receive suggestions or experiences which he may pass on to others through these columns. Address: Dr. Frank Carleton Doan, All Souls' Church, Summit, N. J.

LEAGUE REPORT.

The regular meeting of the New York League of Unitarian Women was held in the Second Unitarian Church, Brooklyn, December 1, 1916, Mrs. Bishoprick, the President, presiding. It was well attended. After the reading of the reports, Mrs. Bishoprick read an invitation to the dedication of the First Unitarian Church, Flushing, December 10, 1916. Mrs. Bishoprick also gave an interesting report of the Conference of the Middle States and Canada, to which she was a delegate.

The appeal for the collection was made by Miss Lowe for the War Relief Fund.

The meeting was in charge of the Philanthropic Committee, under Mrs. Emile Glogau. Miss Julia Jaffray spoke on "The Girl in the Training School." The speaker of the day was Mrs. Henry Needham on the "Big Sisters." It was fully discussed by members of the League, with a view toward doing practical work.

After the meeting adjourned, all were invited by the Branch President to lunch.

ADA L. BARRY.

CONTRASTS.

Is there a man on earth so low
In degradation and in woe
Who yet may ever deeper go
Beyond return?

What! Count my God improvident,
Forecasting no such dire event?
Better theology give vent
At district school.

Can the Almighty limit have,
Omnipotent, yet cannot save?
Dig that theology a grave,
Let bigots mourn.

If God shall fail in one intent
He then is not omnipotent;
Who, walking, talking, serpent sent
Of ill inspired?

Did God make man for Satan's prey,
Or will He save us all some day?
What was His purpose, anyway?
Or had He none?

Behold the prodigal go out
Arrayed in finery all about.
Behold his zeal as he en route
Back tracks for home.

Doth not the ox his owner know?
The ass, too, knows his crib, tho' slow,
The vital spark, shall it not glow
While God survives?

Come, let us reason in the light
Until your scarlet robes are white.
God placed us here, and He will right
Earth's ev'ry wrong.

Most crippled science of them all,
I wonder not at your man's fall.
Theology, why do you crawl?
My faith can wing.

Feb. 22, 1916. JOHN D. GAGE.

WESTERN CONFERENCE NEWS

OHIO.

Cincinnati.—Our Cincinnati church became a very important center of influence at the Christmas season by assuming the responsibility of a community celebration which included the churches, public institutions, and private residents of a district about five blocks square. The cooperation of four other churches, the Cincinnati Woman's Club, the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and other organizations was secured in holding a service in our church on Sunday afternoon, the 24th of December, which was followed by singing around an illuminated and decorated Christmas tree on the church lawn. A Neighborhood Chorus afterwards visited the Bethesda Hospital, which is a short distance away from the church, and also the Cincinnati General Hospital—singing familiar carols to the patients. The location of our church in Cincinnati is such as to render desirable the holding of some such community celebration, instead of taking part in the municipal celebration which is held in the city, and it is believed that this example will be followed by many other community centers in years to come.

The use of several bequests which have come to the church from time to time have made possible the installation of a fine new organ. This instrument has been in process of construction for many months, but was finally completed for use on Christmas Sunday.

A valuable and helpful addition to the membership of our church has just taken place in the removal to Cincinnati of Mr. and Mrs. F. Stanley Howe. Mr. Howe was formerly the Assistant Secretary of the American Unitarian Association in Boston, and has accepted a position of high responsibility in Cincinnati, where he will henceforth make his home.

On the evening of December 15th, a party was held under the auspices of the Unity Club—our young people's organization—to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Howe to our church. The meetings of this organization of young people have been increasingly interesting and well attended since the beginning of the year, and it is now reaching out into all parts of the city from which it draws its membership. The Membership Committee has recently made a canvass of the University, and it is expected that a considerable number of students will soon become affiliated with this organization.

On the event of his western journey as Billings Lecturers, Rev. Fred M. Eliot, President of the National Young People's Religious Union, on January 24th will speak to a joint meeting of the young people's organizations of St. John's German Church and the Unitarian church.

Plans are now being developed to hold a series of cottage meetings in Clifton, and possibly in Hyde Park, during the latter part of January, as well as the development of a careful publicity campaign, in preparation for the visit of Dr. Crothers on Sunday, the 4th of February, and Rev. John Haynes Holmes on the following Sunday. Arrangements have been made for Mr. Holmes to speak at the meeting of the Cincinnati City Club on Saturday noon, and it is not unlikely that Dr. Crothers will deliver a public lecture in one of the large auditoriums during the course of his visit.

The work of the church school is developing with very great satisfaction. The results of the Institute for Religious Education, conducted by Mrs. Marshall in October, are being manifested by a renewed devotion and activity on the part of the teachers, which in turn manifests itself in very considerable increase in the size of the school. The enrollment has now reached one hundred, with nearly one hundred per cent attendance every Sunday. An adult Bible class for the critical study of the New Testament has been organized, under the leadership of Dr. Thayer, and is proving of very great interest and value to large numbers of persons who attend.

Cleveland.—The Cleveland church is carrying on a successful year. The recent annual Fair was, as usual, a first cause for big results.

Our League for Social Service is meeting directly after the morning service. It aims to be the morning congregation under another name, and to have presented for discussion the work of the various philanthropies of the city. Any visiting specialist in the field of sociology is heard with great profit. In these meetings we hope to enlist volunteers and spread a more intelligent interest in the great work of social service.

Dayton.—On the evening of December 14th, Rev. J. Morris Evans was installed as minister of the First Unitarian Church at Dayton. Mr. Charles H. Kumler, chairman of the Board of Trustees, presided. Rev. George A. Thayer, D. D., of Cincinnati, gave the prayer of installation, and addresses were given as follows: "The Minister and the Community," Dr. D. Frank Garland of Dayton; "Our Church and What It Stands For," Rev. Minot O. Simons of Cleveland; "Our Church and Its Relation to the Liberal Movement," Rev. Ernest C. Smith of Chicago; "What We Expect from Our Ministers," Rev. F. S. C. Wicks of Indianapolis; "Ministerial Fraternalism," Rev. David Lefkowitz of Day-

ton. The closing prayer was offered by the pastor. Despite severe cold and a light flurry of snow, there was a goodly audience. Mr. Evans has been on the ground for four Sundays, the congregations being of encouraging size. The church took a long time to find its new leader, but feels that the long wait was justified and that the right leader has been found.

MICHIGAN.

Detroit.—Billy Sunday has come and gone, leaving the Evangelical churches struggling to sustain the sensational interest and excitement aroused. The Unitarian church took no notice of his advent, unwilling to make the mountebank an issue. An educational campaign, however, was planned to counteract the intellectual demoralization of the community. Regular Sunday evening services had not been held in the church for many years until this fall. Started as an experiment, they have been so successful in point of attendance and interest that they will be continued through the winter.

Rev. W. L. Sullivan, on his return from the West, early in October, opened the series of meetings, making a profound impression even beyond liberal circles. Lincoln Steffens with a very different message, but one worth hearing, described Mexican conditions, personally investigated by him, showing Carranza's sincere efforts at reform with the financial interests in opposition.

Later came Sir Rabindranath Tagore, for whom Mr. and Mrs. Shippen gave a reception one afternoon. On the occasion of his visit to the church, the edifice was crowded to the doors. He drew a sharp contrast between the materialistic, commercial spirit of the West and the devotional mind of the East.

Our Ann Arbor, Toledo, and Cleveland ministers generously gave evenings in the series, bringing most acceptable messages. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, for the first time visiting the church in many years, spoke to a large gathering with unabated force on "The Golden Rule Among Nations." Mr. Shippen plans to interpret some social dramas during the Sunday evenings of January.

The Literature Committee has distributed not less than four thousand Unitarian tracts in the past four months, taking advantage of the large number of strangers attending both services. The church has now sixteen nationalities represented in its congregation, showing the cosmopolitan character of Detroit. Twenty-eight new subscribers have been enrolled the past month.

The Alliance Fair, held early in December, cleverly carrying out the idea of the "House of Seven Gables," was a pronounced success, netting nearly a thousand dollars with a by-product of good feeling and strengthened fellowship.

Mrs. George M. Morau, our new Social and Financial Secretary, has proved an invaluable addition to the organization—acceptable to old members by reason of her long connection with the church, and readily winning friends among the new members through her social experience and tact.

Ann Arbor.—The attendance at all of the meetings of the Student Young People's Society is larger this year than usual, due to a more careful organization of the various committees. The Program Committee is divided into two sections, one of women, the other of men, and they take charge of alternate months, the friendly rivalry leading to an improvement in the programs and in the attendance on Sunday evenings. The Woman's Society has raised as usual over $200 through its annual Christmas sale. The Sunday school has been strengthened by organizing the boys' class into a club, under the direction of a teacher who during the summer had most of these boys with him in one of the city playgrounds, of which he was the man director. This left the girls of similar age, eleven to fourteen, unprovided for except by the usual lesson class. So they have been organized into a Camp Fire Club under the direction of an expert teacher. In both cases a small sum is paid for the work, but the result seems to justify the expense.

Grand Haven.—Services have been resumed in the Unitarian church in Grand Haven. Every other Sunday evening, Rev. Daniel Roy Freeman goes down from Grand Rapids. For many years the Grand Haven church has been simply a supply station. It was organized in the old lumber days, and owns a good building, free of debt, and at one time had its own settled minister, but it has not of late years taken the place in the city which belongs to a liberal institution in a place of the size of Grand Haven. The city is now taking on new life and growth, and the church is looking forward to doing its proper and larger work. Definite arrangements have been made to continue services through the present church year.

Kalamazoo.—Rev. George F. Patterson, who has been for five and one-half years minister of the People's Church at Kalamazoo, on Sunday, December 17th, tendered his resignation, to take effect on or about January 15, 1917.

ILLINOIS.

Chicago.—Our Chicago churches are in full swing of midwinter activities. The usual bazaars and sales have been held. The annual meeting of Unity Church was held on December 18th, the reports showing an active

year and the treasurer reporting all bills paid. The next meeting of the Associate Alliance will be held with Unity Church on January 4, 1917, at which time Mr. Clarence S. Darrow will give an address on "Heredity and Environment."

At the Third Church, the Fellowship Club has been studying "How We Think," by John Dewey. Alternating with these meetings, the club has read dramatic masterpieces and made a study of municipal problems on the basis of Frederic C. Howe's work.

Rev. S. A. Eliot, D. D., President of the American Unitarian Association, gave an address before the Sunday Evening Club on the evening of December 10th, having filled the pulpit of our Evanston church in the morning. This is the second season Dr. Eliot has spoken before the club. These meetings are held in Orchestra Hall, which seats some 2,700 people. A very fine musical service is rendered by a quartet and large chorus choir. Usually, every seat is taken and sometimes people are turned away. We are looking forward with pleasure to brief visits from Rev. John H. Holmes and Rev. S. M. Crothers in February. The Evanston church has maintained regular services since the resignation of Mr. Blake, but has not yet found a permanent leader. On December 24th, a Christmas festival, in which both church and Sunday school joined, was conducted by Mr. John R. Guilliams. On December 31st, Rev. Ernest C. Smith, Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, filled the pulpit, and, on January 7th, Rev. Frederick May Eliot of the First Parish Church, Cambridge, Mass., is to speak.

Bloomington.—The congregations are larger than for several years past. A considerable number of students from the Illinois State Normal School are finding their way to the church. The annual bazaar and supper realized $220. The pastor, Rev. H. H. Burch, has been invited to address the Y. M. C. A. of the State Normal. Recent sermon themes have been "The Spiritual Significance of "The King of the Dark Chamber,'" "The Religion of Leigh Hunt," and three sermons on "The Conjugation of the Verb 'To Be,' a Study in Religious Consciousness." Regular Sunday evening services have been resumed at Sheffield, Mr. Burch coming over from Bloomington for these services. Only occasional services have been held for the last three years. With the beginning of regular services the congregations have largely increased.

Wisconsin.

Madison.—Early in the fall, the new parsonage at Madison, given by Dr. Vilas, was occupied by the minister and his family. The house-warming, at which more than 150 people were present, gave official recognition to the gift. The Sunday school has been completely reorganized. A committee of five members has the work in charge. The classes meet at 9:30 a. m., the class work lasting for forty minutes, after which the school assembles in the main room of the parish house for a brief talk by some adult member of the church and the service for the day. Mr. H. W. Pickford leads the singing, and a five-piece orchestra, led by Prof. J. L. Sammis, helps to enrich the service. A specially gratifying addition to the school is an adult class, led by Prof. P. W. Dawson. The Y. P. R. U. has been active and successful. Regular meetings with addresses are held on Sunday evening, and a business meeting with supper is held once a month. A group of young people has met at the parsonage on Saturday evenings for singing. On December 10th, the Y. P. R. U. conducted services at the Neighborly House, newly opened by the Associated Charities in the Italian settlement, Judge Hoffmann of the Municipal Court and a member of our church giving the address. Unity Club, made up of students and faculty from the University, has held two open meetings, the first addressed by Prof. E. A. Ross and the other held at the University Y. M. C. A. with an address by Prof. Kallen of the Department of Philosophy. In addition to his church work, the minister, Mr. Gilmore, has prepared a book of two hundred pages for the Board of Commerce. This book is an interpretation of the city of Madison to its children and young people, and will be used in the public and parochial schools.

Iowa.

Des Moines.—The minister, Rev. Curtis Williford Reese, has taken an active interest in the housing problem in Des Moines. On November 19th, the Sunday morning sermon-lecture was a vigorous discussion of housing conditions. Special invitations were sent in advance to the mayor and council, various city and state officials, officers of the Associated Charities, and social workers. Many of the people were present at the morning service and remained afterwards for an informal discussion of the suggestions made. The spirit of the meeting was for immediate action. At the suggestion of Attorney General George F. Cosson and Corporation Counsel H. W. Byers, committees were appointed to present the matter to the governor and to cooperate with various social and commercial organizations in an effort for a general survey of housing conditions, and a united effort for improvement.

The first meeting of these committees was held on the following Friday evening at the home of the President of Unity Circle, Mrs.

Walter S. Brown. Plans were then made to present the matter to the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Women's Clubs, city and state officials, besides other local organizations and clubs. The Chamber of Commerce has acted quickly, and a committee appointed for the purpose, numbering six, including Mr. Reese, made application to the city council for the appointment of an official housing commission under the Des Moines plan of commission government. The council acted favorably on this application, and H. W. Byers, Corporation Counsel, is now preparing an ordinance providing for a permanent housing commission to be appointed by the mayor. The community has taken a great interest in this matter, and the various organizations will cooperate with the city in every way possible.

KANSAS.

At Wichita, the minister, Rev. L. M. Birkhead, carried on a six weeks' campaign of special meetings, with Sunday morning addresses on "Significant Recent Attempts to Discover the Real Jesus," and Sunday evening lectures on "The Making of the Bible." The average attendance at the morning services was ninety, and in the evening over a hundred. On Sunday, December 3rd, Rev. William Channing Brown, Field Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, occupied the pulpit, and the following Sunday Rabbi Bernard Cantor was the preacher. This enabled Mr. Birkhead to conduct a preaching mission at Unity Church in Denver, Colo., where he delivered eight sermons between December 3rd and December 10th. The church is regretting the loss of Mr. T. L. Bergen and family from its working force, they having taken up their residence at Morris, Ill. For more than a dozen years, the Bergens have taken a vital interest in the church and carried their full share of its burden. Regret and best wishes follow them to their new home.

THE NEW ENGLAND NEWS LETTER

As I write this letter, the greatest contest over liquor for forty years in Puritan Boston is being waged in the ballot box! And —hurrah!—not only have several Hub Unitarian ministers signed a no-license advertisement, but the Unitarian Temperance Society, under signature of its directors, has come out in favor of no license, stating its opinion that, in case of victory, Unitarian citizens may be depended upon to help enforce the law! It's good to see our men lining up against the most infamous business of corruption tolerated in modern society. Our John Pierponts are not all dead yet!

Three other important things have been happening in Boston lately. One is the dedication of the Second Church of Brookline, a most happy event. Here, almost in sight of the Second Church of Boston with its vested choir and lighted candles, we have a vigorous representation of the opposite temperament of Unitarianism. Which of these wings shall win out? Or shall they both remain and serve different minds and temperaments within the one body?

Another event is the increased vigor of the Ministerial Union, which for fifty-two years has sought to draw our ministers within hailing distance of Boston together. Thus far the membership has more than doubled that for many years past, and the attendance is most inspiring. The ideals of good-fellowship and ministerial helpfulness have been made prominent. Fifteen minutes of singing preceding the meeting proper, the wearing of little identification cards, a buffet luncheon provided by the treasury of the Union, and topics for discussion vitally concerned with church and parish work have drawn great interest.

Another note of general interest is the inaugurating of a liberal Sunday Club in Boston to maintain a center for liberal preaching where noted preachers from the world over may be heard. Backed by the Ministerial Union, a largely attended meeting of both ministers and laymen enthusiastically decided to hold the initial meeting of such an organization as early in the new year as possible in Symphony Hall. It may fairly be stated that this is one of the contributions of "Billy Sunday" to Boston!

Interesting letters have come to me this month from New England correspondents. Here is one from our New London church with an attractive December calendar. The letter says, "We are shedding the light of liberalism over a stubborn-souled community," and goes on to give a happy glance at the young people's work, the Alliance, and Sunday congregation. Word from this *live* church and minister is always inspiring. Next are calendars from Newport, R. I. Their most interesting announcements are the Christmas meetings and the Thanksgiving service, which latter was in the Unitarian church, cooperating with two Congregational churches, four Methodist, four Baptist, and one Presbyterian. From Vermont comes word from Dr. Carson that affairs in the Montpelier church are very prosperous. Dr. Carson has inaugurated a Young People's Society with regular Sunday meetings, and has taken up once more the three outlying schoolhouse meetings which Dr. Wright so heroically maintained for thirty years. Mention in this letter is happily made of the Burlington church, Dr. Carson's nearest Unitarian neighbor, where the Unity Club especially flourishes, with a visit listed for the

near future from Mr. Rihbany. The Stowe, Vt., church pulpit has only occasional supplies since Rev. Mr. Crane's removal from town. In the old "Pine Tree" state, we hear from Sanford, where Rev. George F. Pratt is making great strides toward erecting a church building for his flock. He writes enthusiastically of a Liberal Ministers' Association for Western Maine and part of New Hampshire, which has already had two meetings, one in Kennebunk and one in Saco, and of which Rev. C. R. Joy is President. At Portland a week of noon meetings has been held for business people, and at Saco evening meetings have been maintained of the same character. From other sources I hear that our Maine churches are active!

A few items from Massachusetts churches may be added to close this letter. The Lowell church, founded nearly a century ago, is experiencing a revival under the leadership of Mr. Hussey, lately of Baltimore. The Alliance study class is delving into a history of their faith; the Men's Club enjoy monthly dinners, well attended; the Sunday school has added a "Church Hour Kindergarten;" a Parish Bulletin of newsy items is regularly sent out to the people; Sunday evening union meetings during the winter are participated in, along with Universalist and Congregational brethren, and last summer the Flower Mission and Country Week activities were more successfully carried out than ever. A good list, Mr. Hussey! All Souls', Roxbury, with a new minister in Rev. George A. Mark, is prospering joyfully. One especially large meeting under the auspices of the Young People's Guild was addressed by Miss Marian Holmes in the interest of her work with the American Ambulance Service in France. At our Northampton Church, Mr. Rihbany lately spoke to many college girls, arousing great interest. In old Marblehead, the first settled minister of our order for years has just been called, and so Mr. Shurtleff takes up his work with much promise and zeal. At Roslindale we have a marked example of a modern, radical, Unitarian church, so successful that we intend to run a descriptive article on it next month.

Tuckerman School is flourishing in its new home; this year the annual New Year's reception at 25 Beacon Street is not to be indulged in; the National Alliance directors have appointed a committee to compile a "Prayer Book for Young People," in line with recent suggestions from Rev. Fred Eliot; the endowment from Miss Elizabeth P. Channing, both for the A. U. A. and for the National Alliance, has been paid over; protests still come in against the action of the Boston Ministers' Association, which invited Mr. Sunday to speak to them (and excluded Theodore Parker from its membership!); Mr. Sunday has, to date (December 19th), preached to 891,000 people and shaken hands with 28,941 trail hitters, including one Boston judge, one Massachusetts ex-governor, and one Cambridge ex-mayor; and the next meeting of the New England Associate Alliance is to be held on January 18th in Providence, R. I. Who thinks New England is dead?

Dorchester. CHARLES P. WELLMAN.

MIDDLE STATES LETTER

The annual meeting of the Conference of the Middle States and Eastern Canada was held with this church in November. Besides being a most successful gathering in itself, the meetings gave a decided impetus to our work. All the services are well attended, and the various activities are in a prosperous condition. Much emphasis at present is placed upon the philanthropies, and the several societies engaged in social service report increased interest.

During January and February, the minister is to give a course of eight Sunday evening sermons of a missionary character. The meetings will be followed by a series of confirmation lessons, the class being received into the church family on Easter Sunday. This has become the regular program of the church, the practice more and more justifying itself. The evening services are looked forward to, and those especially interested pursue the matter further in the confirmation class.

LANCASTER, PA.

On October 1, 1916, Rev. Charles Riedel succeeded Rev. E. H. Reeman, who had accepted a call to the new church in Trenton, N. J. Mr. Riedel had been living retired near Plainfield, N. J., for the past four years, and this is his first Protestant ministry, he having served for sixteen years as a priest of the Roman Catholic Church in both Peoria and Lincoln, Ill. His installation took place on November 9th, the Rev. William L. Sullivan preaching the sermon. Mr. Reeman delivered the charge to the congregation, and Rev. James A. Fairley the right hand of fellowship and charge to the minister. Mr. Riedel enters upon his ministry with promise and zeal, and a united congregation will cooperate in all his endeavors.

The Men's Liberal Club began its winter meetings in October and has an interesting program for the winter. The club was very unfortunate in losing its President, Henry E. Hampton, by death in July. The church also loses in Mr. Hampton, an active young layman whose place it will be hard to fill.

The Woman's Alliance with Mrs. J. D. Carpenter at its head is very active in all good

works. The Alliance has again taken charge of the monthly suppers of the Men's Liberal Club, the decorations of the church, and the raising of money for church debt and maintenance. A supper and sale held early in December netted $125. Mr. Riedel is addressing the Wednesday Sewing Circle of the Alliance with a series of talks on the poets.

The Junior Alliance, of which Mildred Hampton is President, is actively aiding the seniors.

The Longfellow Society, which consists of the young people of the church, has taken up the study of Shakespeare as its winter's work, and sociables are also being planned.

The Sunday school has taken on new life with increased numbers, and has never been in so healthy a condition as at present. A church's investment in its Sunday school has always been its most profitable interest.

PITTSBURGH, PA.

The Northside Unitarian Church.—The church school is having a most gratifying record. The registration is about one hundred, with an average attendance of seventy-five. Many of the children live at such long distances from the church that their regular attendance is impossible. To meet this condition there has been devised a "home department" with a course of study paralleling the one followed in the school, which the parents use on Sundays at home. The books are furnished, and the general amount of study to be covered outlined, and quarterly reports requested from the parents as to the work done. At the end of the year these home pupils will be credited with their work, and receive certificates for it. There are seventeen children registered in this department, in addition to the regular registration noted above.

Another innovation this fall is a meeting, each Saturday afternoon, of the intermediate girls for sewing and music, and the using of these girls for the Sunday morning choir.

A fine successful rally day program was held on October 28th. The Christmas festival will occur on December 27th, and after that preparations will begin for a school play. There is an illustrated lecture once a month, by the minister, on "Our American Neighbors."

The Woman's Alliance held its annual bazaar and sale on Tuesday, December 5th. It was the most profitable and largely attended event of the kind we have ever had. The Alliance is holding well-attended monthly meetings, with speakers in addition to its regular business sessions.

The Men's Club started its work in October with a series of four Monday evening meetings, addressed, respectively, by representatives of the four prominent political parties. Then followed a meeting with a general discussion of the result of the election, and another with a talk by a Red Cross physician recently back from the Russian-Turkish front. The club is having monthly dinners at a local hotel, for good-fellowship's sake; the last was attended by about thirty men. A very pleasing incident of the fall was a dinner meeting of the Men's Club of the First Unitarian Church, in which the men of the Northside Church were asked to join. It is planned to hold another joint meeting in January.

The young people are steadily pursuing their earnest efforts towards the social life of the church with marked success. Their dances and receptions are largely attended.

The Sunday morning congregations maintain their normal size, but the Sunday evening congregations show a shrinkage. This is almost entirely due to the peculiar conditions of the location of the Northside Church, which has always made its Sunday evening congregations largely transient, and in this year of "prosperity" that transient element is little interested in churches of any kind or in any serious social or religious discussions. Mere curiosity or amusement takes the place of more serious matters.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.

All Souls' Church.—The interest in this new movement, as evidenced by the attendance at the services, has been better this fall than ever before. On the Sundays when Mr. Fairley has had to be away, the pulpit has been occupied by the following: Dr. Dole; Mr. Spencer Miller, Jr.; Prof. Harry L. Overstreet of the College of the City of New York, and a member of the congregation; Prof. Carleton Parker of the University of Washington; Dean Balliet of New York University; Mr. Edgar A. Josselyn of our own congregation; and Miss Madeleine Doty.

The Men's Club meets once a month, has dinner at a local hotel, and discusses some topic of current interest. The meetings so far this year have been of unusual interest, and largely attended. It has not been the policy of the club to have outside speakers, but to encourage general discussion by all present.

The women of the Alliance are going into the subject of local municipal affairs, and have aroused considerable interest among their members in matters of city administration. They are also working through social and dramatic affairs toward meeting their obligations in paying for the church organ.

Under the direction of the Finance Committee of the trustees, a vigorous campaign has been undertaken toward the raising of a Building Fund. There is a good prospect of having a new meetinghouse under way before the close of the present church year.

MEADVILLE, PA.

The church this season has changed its music from a paid quartet to a volunteer chorus with paid soloists. The chorus is

made up of people from the town, and students and professors from the theological school. It is working well, especially in the increase of interest and response from the congregation, which generally sings the hymns well. The chorus sings also for the evening services, and the soloist at these has generally been a violinist.

The Sunday evening sermon-lectures for November and December have been on "Things That Vitally Concern Religion." They have been on "The Bible," by Rev. H. T. Secrist; "Jesus," by Prof. C. R. Bowen; "The Apostles' Creed and Other Creeds," by Prof. F. S. Christie; "The World Religions," by Mr. Secrist; "The Church," by President F. C. Southworth; "Nature and Human Nature," by Prof. R. J. Hutcheon, and "Humanitarian Service," by Prof. Anna Garlin Spencer. On Sunday, December 3rd, Mr. Charles J. Woodbury spoke out of his personal acquaintance with Emerson on "Emerson Himself."

ORANGE, N. J.

Under the direction of a special committee, the church grounds are being beautified, a box tree and barberry bushes being recently set out after a carefully prepared plan had been adopted at a church meeting. Mr. Hunt preached on Sunday, December 3rd, on "The East Speaks to the West Through the Spirit of Rabindranath Tagore." His brother, Ralph H. Hunt, M. D., the Orange Health Officer, spoke at an evening service on "Poliomyelitis," in controlling which epidemic he played an important part.

The ministers of the New Jersey churches were recently entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Hunt, and a New Jersey Ministerial Association was organized with Mr. Hunt as President and Mr. Evans of Elizabeth as Secretary. Occasional meetings of the New Jersey churches are in contemplation.

PATERSON, N. J.

The young church in Paterson greatly dared, and secured a lecture by Sir Rabindranath Tagore. It became a city event, and attracted much attention to the church. A large audience was present, which resulted in the substantial financial profit of the church and yet greater profit in bringing itself to the favorable notice of the general public.

MONTCLAIR, N. J.

The Montclair church on a recent Sunday held an "Appraisal Day," taking the machinery of an every-member canvass and adopting it. Every member of the church was called on by two of the forty-odd canvassers. Money raising was purely incidental, though several hundred dollars in increased subscriptions resulted. But blanks were sent to all, and each was asked to check just which of the church activities he valued, to double check those he valued most, and to treble check which of these and which of the results of his church affiliations he wished more of. On the appraisal sheet was printed a list of possible products of a church, such as spiritual insight, mental stimulus, fellowship of kindred spirits, sympathy for fellow men, passion for justice, sense of the divine, optimism and courage, kindly toleration of the opinions of others, etc. Each one checked these, and their tabulation will show not only what the church is succeeding in giving, but where it is failing. Criticism was invited and urged. Other blank spaces afforded an opportunity to check what each was giving in return in attendance, in active service, and in financial support. The enthusiasm with which the canvassers returned showed the success of the endeavor, and the facts and reactions gained will afford a basis for all future work.

Unity Alliance had its date in January for a lecture by Tagore cancelled by his earlier return. By enterprise they secured the only possible evening left, and on a week's notice by hard work managed to pack the church and clear $300. The memory of that evening with the great seer will be unforgettable for all who shared it.

FLUSHING, N. Y.

The new church building, whose corner stone was laid in 1914, was dedicated on December 10th. The sermon was preached by Mr. Holmes, the prayer of dedication given by Mr. Sullivan, greeting extended from the Brooklyn churches by Mr. Lathrop, from the Manhattan churches by Mr. Wright, from the New Jersey churches by Miss Padgham, and from the Flushing churches by Rev. George D. Egbert of the Congregational church.

FREDONIA, N. Y.

The movement inaugurated at Fredonia by Mr. Adlard of the Dunkirk church is flourishing. Mr. Fairley, the Middle States Secretary, preached to 125 people in the opera house there recently.

VINELAND, N. J.

The church in Vineland will continue services with supplies which they hope to get from Philadelphia.

ALBANY, N. Y.

Mr. Graves is preaching an extended series of sermons on "Heresy in Recent Fiction." The original series aroused such deep interest it is being continued. The following subjects will be discussed on the dates given:

December 17th—"Religious Criticism in Fiction:" "Arundel" and "The Weaker Vessel," both by E. F. Benson; "Thirty," by Howard V. O'Brien; "Mary 'Gusta," by Joseph C. Lin-

coln; "The Circuit Rider's Widow," by Cora Harris; "Child and Country," by Will Levington Comfort; "Casuals of the Sea," by William McFee.

December 24th—"A Christmas Sermon: The Christ That Was Born."

December 31st—"Religion and War:" "Mr. Britling Sees It Through," by H. G. Wells; "Nicky-Nan Reservist," by A. T. Quiller-Couch; "Dead Yesterday," by Mary Agnes Hamilton.

January 7th—"God As a Dependent Being:" "Father Payne," Anonymous; "The Winged Victory," by Sarah Grand.

January 14th—The World Today and Yesterday:" "Memories," by Edward Clodd.

January 21st—"A Modern Missionary of the Old School:" "Mary Slessor of Calabar," by W. P. Livingstone.

January 28th—"Why the Church Should Not Have a Creed."

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

The Rochester church reports progress in all branches of its work.

The Sunday services are being attended by increasing groups of strangers and visitors, with marked interest in the messages of the pulpit. Recent sermons by Dr. Marshall have been on such subjects as the following: "The Philosophy of Loyalty," a sermon memorial to the late Josiah Royce; "The Making of the Gods," a study of primitive processes in theology; "Akhenaton," a study of the ancient Egyptian reformer, Amenophis; "The Struggle for Existence," one of a series of studies in which Dr. Marshall is indicating the religious bearings of scientific truths; "The Life of Giordano Bruno, 1548-1600;" "The Atonement and the Modern Mind;" and "Fear and Adventure in Religion."

In the work of religious education, notable advance is being made. The new adventure with a revised curriculum is working out in a promising way, and the interest of the children is trebled by the presentation of difficult material. Even children are human, it is being proved, by their love of hard tasks, a challenge to their powers. The attendance at the school has greatly increased, through comprehensive paid publicity.

Of special interest is the growth of a Young People's Group, its social life developing wholly around its religious study, under the direction of Mrs. Marshall. This growing body of young people gives great promise for the future of the church.

We are able to report in unmeasured terms the success of the "Church Night" idea—the monthly church socials (at which the drama work is offered)—being already assured successes. The various lectures on the other Wednesdays have been well attended. A new series commences in January.

Social activities keep up, and widen. The Gaunett House activities are in full operation; the church itself is conceiving its function in missionary terms; foreign relief work, assistance for Tuskegee Institute, and other things engage our attention. Thus the present of the Rochester church is healthy, with varied activity, and rich with promise for the future.

DUNKIRK, N. Y.

Since the reopening of the church here in September last, Mr. Adlard has surely been one of the busiest of our ministers. His two charges, Dunkirk and Fredonia, representing a population of 25,000, bring him before an average congregation of from two hundred to 250 different people each week. The Fredonia Theatre service has long since passed the stage of mere curiosity. It has now settled into a definite, concrete congregation, to whom the liberal faith and worship are an absolute necessity. The matter of forming a regular church has been seriously discussed by the small local executive in the presence of Rev. J. A. Fairley, but it was felt that the time was not yet ripe for that very decisive step in such a small town.

Some of Mr. Adlard's topics in Dunkirk strike a strong modern note. The following are suggestive: "Is the Ministry a Man's Job?" "The Prophet of the New Penal System, Thomas Mott Osborne;" "The Failure of Physical Force;" a preelection sermon on "The Ideal City and Citizenship;" H. G. Wells' great book, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through." One sermon a month on "Prayer Problems" has also met the lifelong need of several. In addition to the pulpit work, Mr. Adlard is giving a series of ten week-day lectures on the English poets, supplementary to the lectures on English literature of a year ago. The present course consists of Dryden, Pope, Burns, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Hood, Tennyson, and Browning. They are held in the Free Library, and amongst the audience, which averages fifty, there are to be found representatives of all the Protestant churches, and also of the Catholic church. These are given under the auspices of the Ladies' Alliance, and are found indirectly to be one means of augmenting the Sunday congregation, and directly of providing people with an opportunity of hearing many a religious utterance from a liberal minister, which arises out of the lecture. Mr. Adlard occupied the pulpit of the Church of Our Father, Ottawa, for two Sundays in December, and also lectured on Charles Dickens. In his absence, the Dunkirk friends found a most delightful and much-appreciated substitute in the Rev. J. A. Fairley. Mr. Fairley preached at Fredonia one evening, the other supply being the Rev. R. W. Boynton of Buffalo.

On December 6th, a large church family

supper and gathering was held, to which 110 people sat down. Following directly upon this, the pastor introduced the subject of "Church Efficiency," dealing with modern business methods, publicity, and service. Discussion followed, with the result that a committee of five was appointed to draw up plans for organizing the church, something after the fashion of the Erie, Pa., plan which Mr. Adlard outlined.

FELLOWSHIP NOTICES.

Rev. George Wallace Penniman, having satisfied the Committee on Fellowship of the New England States, is hereby commended to our ministers and churches. Certificate granted, December 11, 1916. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz.

Rev. John Morris Evans, having satisfied the Committee on Fellowship of his fitness for the Unitarian ministry, is hereby commended to our ministers and churches. Final certificate, November 6, 1916. Leon A. Harvey, James A. Fairley, Walter H. Hunt, Middle States Committee.

Rev. George S. S. Kuhki is hereby commended to the ministers and churches of the Unitarian Fellowship for a probationary period of one year, ending on June 21, 1917. Leon A. Harvey, James A. Fairly, Walter H. Hunt, Middle States Committee.

The New England Fellowship Committee has received from Rev. E. B. Saunders of the Universalist denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Secretary, 91 Park St., Newton, Mass.

The New England Fellowship Committee has received from Robert M. L. Holt an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Secretary, 91 Park St., Newton, Mass.

Leon Sherman Pratt is hereby commended to the ministers and churches of the Unitarian Fellowship for a probationary period of six months, ending June 21, 1917. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Committee for New England.

Aars Johannes Jalkanen is hereby commended to the ministers and churches of the Unitarian Fellowship for a probationary period of six months. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Committee for New England.

Rev. E. M. W. Smith, having satisfied the Committee on Fellowship of the New England States, is hereby commended to our ministers and churches. Certificate granted, November 24, 1916. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz.

The New England Fellowship Committee has received from Rev. Edson Russell Miles of the Universalist denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Secretary, 91 Park St., Newton, Mass.

The New England Fellowship Committee has received from Rev. Harry Enos Rouillard of the Universalist denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Secretary, 91 Park St., Newton, Mass.

The New England Fellowship Committee has received from W. A. Marzolf of the Congregational denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Secretary, 91 Park St., Newton, Mass.

The New England Fellowship Committee has received from Samuel G. Dunham of the Universalist denomination an application for the certificate of commendation issued by this committee. Charles T. Billings, Julian C. Jaynes, Harry Lutz, Secretary, 91 Park St., Newton, Mass.

SUPPLICATION.

O God, send light unto my soul;
And power, that I may rise,
And soar, and view life as it is
From yon eternal skies.

I long to breathe that clearer air,
To see with clearer sight;
I long to be a guiding star
That shineth in the night.

Then, knowing all of sin and crime,
And sorrowing and pain,
I'd help to wash away with tears
That cleanseth as the rain.

And knowing all of joy and peace,
And all of love and right,
I'd stand upon the path to Heaven
And shine with all my might.

And all the stars shall brighter glow
And nearer draw to Thee,
To be in part Heaven's holy light
Through all eternity.

L. E. CARY.

THE SYRIAN CHRIST

By ABRAHAM M. RIHBANY
Minister of the Church of the Disciples, Boston, Mass.

There is unusual significance in this study and interpretation of Jesus Christ by a Syrian. As a prophet and a seer, Jesus belongs to all races and all ages, but in his modes of thought and life, and his methods of teaching, he was distinctly a Syrian.

Conditions of life in Syria have changed but little since the days of Jesus, and Mr. Rihbany's own experience and knowledge qualify him to throw fresh light on the life and teachings of Christ and on other portions of the Bible whose correct understanding depends to some extent on accurate knowledge of the original environment. For these common things, of an everyday life so unlike our own, are interwoven with the spiritual truths of the Bible; we must understand these conditions if we are to read it with full appreciation, and to get at the inner and vital significance of many passages in both Old and New Testaments.

$1.50 Net; By Mail $1.60

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
Twenty-Five Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

The Ideal Sermon Cabinet

and INDEX will enable you to PREPARE YOUR SERMONS According to a Method

Devised by a minister along lines recommended by leading professors of Homiletics.

Saves time, conserves research and keeps your data, manuscripts, book references and clippings at your finger's end.

Acting as a stimulus to thought it develops the creative and original and makes preparation pleasant and inspirational.

It enables you to enter your Pulpit with confidence and

Deliver Your Message With Power

Sent on trial. Write today for free booklet entitled

"The Preparation and Care of Sermons"

THE BEACON PRESS, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

For What Do Unitarian Churches Stand?

For the religion of the spirit, as distinguished from the religion of authority, whether of pope or book, of priest or synod. They accept "truth for authority, not authority for truth," and believe in the never ceasing revelation of God to man in all lands and ages.

For freedom of thought and word, believing that freedom and truth go ever hand in hand. Therefore they do not attempt to prescribe the belief of either their ministers or their laymen, nor do they fear diversity of opinion as incompatible with unity of spirit.

For the fuller realization of the divine in the universe and in the heart of man. They believe that God is Infinite Spirit, the source of all life and truth, and that something of the nature of God may be apprehended by study of humanity, and of the world about us.

For belief in the divine humanity of Jesus, because they hold that all souls are children of the Infinite Spirit, and that the divine sonship is a universal manifestation, not a unique phenomenon.

For civic reform, economic justice, and social regeneration, believing that the mission of the church is now and here to establish the divine commonwealth of love and peace on earth.

For eternal life—not merely another life of blissful ease, which we shall discover beyond the grave; but life which already lays hold upon immortality because it is even now in harmony with God's divine order.